

Guidelines for Preventing Child Sexual and Physical Abuse

(This Policy adopted by the Board of Directors of Gander Brook)

Because of the reality of child abuse , it is important for us as counselors, staff, adults at camp, and volunteers to not only protect our campers from any situation that could be construed as abusive, but also to protect yourself from being in a position to be accused of improper sexual contact. It is best to avoid situations where sexual abuse is most likely to occur, and situations that could easily lead to allegations (whether accurate or false). For this reason, the Board of Directors have come up with the following guidelines to protect you as well as our campers from even a hint of sexual or physical abuse. These guidelines apply to ALL staff, adults, and volunteers at camp and are to be taken very seriously. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in the staff member or adult volunteer being sent home and not asked back.

1. Each summer Director is to designate a “confidential counselor” to whom any camper or other child can go at any time without special permission to discuss any problems he or she may be having. This would normally be one of the Directors and/or the Nurse.
2. The board shall establish a policy of conducting a fair and discreet investigation of all alleged incidents of sexual abuse. ALL allegations will be investigated. Suspected abusers will be asked to leave. We are required by law to report any incident that involves physical abuse or sexual abuse of any staff member or camper.
3. The counselors, staff, adults, and volunteers should limit their physical contact with children. Such contact that is not allowed includes excessive horseplay, rubbing backs and for kids above junior camp age, holding hands or allowing kids to sit on laps. Hugs and other signs of encouragements can be used as long as it does not make the camper uncomfortable. Any contact that could be misunderstood, must be avoided.
4. There is to be no hazing or physical punishments of any kind. If a camper has become a danger to him or herself or others, the summer director, his assigned replacement or counselor are to be notified as soon as possible of the incident. It is ok to physically restrain the camper in the least restrictive manner possible, if necessary to prevent them from causing injury to themselves or others... Any type of hazing will be dealt with immediate and permanent dismissal.
5. All activities are to be done in an open area or room, and not in private. If a counselor, an adult or volunteer must talk to a camper privately, move away from the crowd but in sight of other campers and adults. If more privacy is required, two unrelated adults must be with

the camper, and if the camper is female, one adult must also be female, normally that camper's counselor or the camp nurse.

6. More than one adult or counselor must accompany a camper on field trips or any activity. One adult, a director or appointed person and a counselor or other appointed person must accompany a camper for a trip to the emergency room. Any and all trips to a Hospital Emergency Room or to an Urgent care facility require the notification of the parents or guardians of the camper as soon as possible.

7. Counselors must be aware of where their campers are at all times, and are not to leave a camper unsupervised.

8. Counselors, staff, adults and volunteers should not spend "off duty" time with campers without permission from the director. Adults and volunteers who have contact with campers in the course of performing their duties must make sure that such time is spent in the open area or in groups of no less than three people. No counselor, staff member, adult, or volunteer may be alone with a camper at any time. Not following this guideline may result in permanent dismissal by the Director.

9. Counselors, staff, adults and volunteers are not allowed to contact and correspond with campers outside of camp via text, cell, or social media. This is for your protection as well as for the protection of our campers.

10. Counselors, staff, adults and all volunteers are mandated reporters of abuse. If you even suspect that any abuse has taken place either at camp or before coming to camp, you are required to report it. The proper procedure for reporting any abuse is to discuss your concerns with the Directors and or the camp nurse. They may then discuss this with the camper or contact the proper authorities for follow up. Under no circumstance should you discuss any of this with anyone else in the camp. The camper's privacy must be honored and the camper treated with all respect due him or her. If at any time you feel that something is not being done about the situation, you are encouraged to discuss your concerns with the nurse and/or director. The Summer Director after receiving knowledge of abuse would then contact the proper authorities, parents/guardians and the GB Board President. The Sexual Abuse Hotline number is: 1-800-284-7821.